REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the telephone interview of April 4, 2005 and for her comments and suggestions during that conversation. In response to that telephone interview and the official action mailed January 28, 2005, the Applicant submits the above claim amendments and the following remarks.

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 68 and 86 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicant further thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 67, 85 and 107-110 would be allowable once the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejections are overcome. Claim 67 is amended to overcome the noted section 112 rejections. Independent claim 85 is amended to overcome the section 112 rejections. As claim 86 depends directly from claim 85 both those claims are believed to be allowable. Claims 107-110 are amended to overcome the section § 112 rejects and are now believed to be in allowable form.

Claims 54-94 and 103 are rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as being unpatentable over Gupta `258 in view of Heidorn `686. The Applicant acknowledges and respectfully traverses the raised obviousness rejection in view of the following remarks.

Independent claims 54 and 73 is amended to contain limitations of an attribute type identifier. Specifically claim 54 now recites the limitations of "[a] method of processing free-format data stored in a computing system, comprising the steps of. . .examining elements of the free-format data. . .producing additional data relating to the attribute information, in a form of a text object, the text object comprising: an attribute-type identifier which identifies an attribute-type of the elements of the free-format data. . .". Claim 73 now recites the limitations of "[a] processing system for processing free-format data stored in a computing system. . .means for examining elements of the free-format data. . .means for producing additional data relating to the attribute information, in a form of a text object, the text object

comprising, an attribute-type identifier which identifies an attribute-type of an element of the free-format data. . .".

Concerning the pending claims, the Applicant asserts a "text object" and "text object index" are different elements. As discussed in prior responses, the "text object" is, in fact, an additional layer of data which allows an interface to the free-format data (which remains in free-format form). This additional or "virtual" data is in the form of a "text node tree" including information about the free-format data, i.e., metadata about the free-format data). Fig. 3 of the drawings of the specification illustrates a text node tree of a text object. A text object enables access to and manipulation of the free-format data in advantageous ways, as discussed in detail in the specification and the Applicant adamantly asserts that this is not disclosed or even suggested by any of the prior art references cited by the Examiner.

A "text object index", however, is an index including information about text objects that have been produced in accordance with the present invention. Fig. 1, which shows a high-level architecture of the present invention, clearly shows that the text objects (105) and text object index (109) are totally separate. Both text objects and text object index are clearly discussed in the specification. As such, claim 54 refers to producing additional data in the form of a text object, not a text object index. In addition, there is no disclosure in the prior art cited by the Examiner of a text object which comprises additional data enabling access to and manipulation of free-format data

If any further amendment to this application is believed necessary to advance prosecution and place this case in allowable form, the Examiner is courteously solicited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

In view of the above claim amendments, the Applicant respectfully submits that further comments concerning the applied prior art of Gupta `258 in view of Heidorn `686 is not believed necessary. The Applicant also notes the remaining prior art cited in the official action. As none of that additional art is applied by the Examiner against the claims of this application, the Applicant is not providing any comments concerning that art as well.
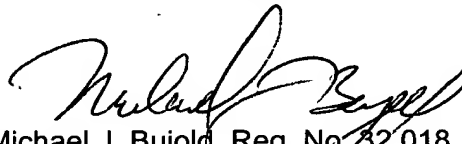
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn and this application is now placed in a condition for allowance. Action to that end, in the form of an early Notice of Allowance, is courteously solicited by the Applicant at this time.

The Applicant respectfully requests that any outstanding objection(s) or requirement(s), as to the form of this application, be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated for this case.

In the event that there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge the same or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account (Account No. 04-0213).

Respectfully submitted,

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